

## Message Text

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14

ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW

TO USIA WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 5108

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC PL

SUBJ: DEBRIEFING OF GUIDES OF PROGRESS AND ENVIRONMENT EXHIBIT

REF: WARSAW 2146

1. AT A BARBECUE AT MY RESIDENCE, I HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO THANK THE DIRECTOR AND GUIDES OF THE PROGRESS AND ENVIRONMENT EXHIBIT FOR THEIR FINE WORK, WHICH I OBSERVED IN WROCLAW, LODZ AND KATOWICE. IN OUR INFORMAL CONVERSATIONS, THE GUIDES EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE INTENSIVE ONE-TO-ONE CONTACT WORK MADE POSSIBLE BY THE EXHIBIT TECHNIQUE. THEY REVEALED SOME SHARP INSIGHTS INTO AND JUDGMENTS ABOUT POLISH NATIONAL CHARACTER AND POLISH REACTIONS TO U.S. LIFE AS REPRESENTED BY THE EXHIBIT AND AS ACQUIRED THROUGH FILMS, TELEVISION, SUCH PUBLICATIONS ON THE U.S. AS CAN BE FOUND HERE, AND WORD-OF-MOUTH.

2. THE GUIDES NOTED, FOR INSTANCE, THAT A RECURRENT CONCERN VOICED BY MANY POLISH VISITORS WAS THE NECESSITY OF ESTABLISHING IN THEIR OWN MINDS THE NATIONAL IDENTITY OF THE GUIDES, ALL OF WHOM BEAR POLISH SURNAMES: "ARE YOU AMERICAN OR POLISH?" THE GUIDES ANSWERED THAT THEY WERE AMERICANS AND ASSUAGED POLISH PRIDE BY ADDING THAT SOME PART OF THEIR SPIRITUAL CORE WAS POLISH. THIS POLISH CONCERN SEEMED TO STEM FROM A FEELING OF INFERIORITY, WHICH FOUND REPEATED EXPRESSION IN THE FACE OF THE OBVIOUS MATERIAL

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SUPERIORITY OF THE UNITED STATES, EVIDENT FROM THE VERY SUBJECT

MATTER OF THE EXHIBIT. POLISH VISITORS WERE APOLOGETIC FOR THE MODEST LIVING CONDITIONS AND LACK OF CONVENIENCES THE GUIDES WERE EXPERIENCING. AT THE SAME TIME, THEY COMPENSATED FOR THEIR FEELING OF INFERIORITY BY TAKING REFUGE IN SELF-ASCRIBED SUPERIOR ATTAINMENTS IN MATTERS OF THE SPIRIT AND GENERAL CULTURE. "YOU ARE MATERIALISTIC. WE ARE NOT. THINGS OF THE SPIRIT MATTER MORE TO US THAN THEY DO TO YOU. YOU ARE SPOILED. WE ARE STILL MAKING THINGS BETTER THAN THEY WERE AFTER THE DESTRUCTION OF THE WAR".

3. I UNDERScore THESE TWO RELATED OBSERVATIONS BY THE GUIDES IN THE HOPE THAT THEIR EXPERIENCE OF THESE SENSITIVE POLISH ATTITUDES WILL BE TRANSMITTED TO GUIDES FOR FUTURE EXHIBITS HERE, SINCE LOCAL PERCEPTION OF OUR EXHIBIT MESSAGE IS FUNDAMENTALLY COLORED BY THEM. THIS WIDE GAP IN MATERIAL THINGS AND COMFORTS CAN BE A DETERRENT TO THE UNDERSTANDING WE HOPE TO FOSTER THROUGH OUR USE OF EXHIBITS AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA. IT SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO DIMINISH THE CREDIBILITY OF OUR EXHIBITS. AND NEW ONES, LIKE THE PROPOSED "INDOOR LIVING" EXHIBIT (REFTEL), SHOULD NOT OVERSTATE OR OVERSELL THE MATERIAL COMFORTS AVAILABLE TO THE AMERICANS WHO CAN AFFORD THEM. RATHER, THEY SHOULD CONSTITUTE A STRAIGHTFORWARD DEMONSTRATION OF THE STATE-OF-THE-ART AND AVAILABLE ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY, WITHOUT GIVING THE IMPRESSION THAT ALL AMERICANS POSSESS THE LAST WORD IN PUSH-BUTTON, AUTOMATED, AIR-CONDITIONED HOMES.

4. THE AGENCY'S DEBRIEFING SESSION WITH THIS VERY SHARP GROUP OF EXHIBIT GUIDES SHOULD BE A VALUABLE ONE. I WOULD APPRECIATE HAVING A COPY OF THE DEBRIEFING REPORT SENT TO ME PERSONALLY.  
DAVIES

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## Message Attributes

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